




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR STRETTON

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (10.00 pm): I rise to respond to the 2025-26 Queensland state budget, a budget from an LNP government that is, frankly, a masterclass in spin, broken promises and missed opportunities. For families in my electorate of Stretton, and indeed right across Queensland, this budget offers very little comfort. It is not a budget that meets the moment, it is certainly not a budget that delivers on trust and it is certainly not a budget that delivers on the Premier's word.

This is not a boring budget; it is a very bad budget from a bumbling Treasurer, delivering pain without pay-off. Let's be clear about what this budget really is. It is a budget that blows away cost-of-living support for millions of Queenslanders. It is a budget that cuts billions from congestion-busting infrastructure projects. It is a budget that makes people wait longer for medical treatment. It is a budget that does nothing to address the shortage of social and affordable housing. It is a budget that makes it harder for Queenslanders to get around and harder for Queenslanders to get ahead. It is a budget that continues the LNP's obsession with spin over substance.

Let me deal first with the LNP's so-called signature housing initiative—their shared equity scheme. This is their big idea, their headline policy, their flagship housing solution, but what is it really? It is very small, it is very selective and it is also very exclusive. At best it will help 1,000 Queenslanders a year, yet more than 25,000 first home buyers enter the market in Queensland each year. It is not much of a vision and it will not do anything to fix the housing crisis. It also does not go far enough.

Moreover, like so much in this budget, it is policy stolen from Labor. It was federal Labor, under Anthony Albanese, that delivered a real national shared equity scheme. The same LNP that opposed it in Canberra, where they called it 'dangerous', now rebrands it here in Queensland with a fraction of the funding and none of the ambition. That is a pattern we see right across this budget. The 50-cent public transport fares—Labor's idea. The Play On! kids' sports vouchers—Labor's idea. The entire capital works pipeline—Labor's projects just delayed, descoped and defunded. This budget is like a cheap Temu knock-off of Labor's work, but it gets worse. This government does not stand for anything. They spent nearly a decade in opposition and their big governing idea was to copy Labor's policies, shrink them, underfund them and then slap a blue logo on them.

They have built a government on slogans and secret polling, not on substance. Nowhere is that clearer than in the Premier's litany of broken promises. Let's remember exactly what the Premier told Queenslanders. He said, 'When I say something it means something,' but on almost every measure his word has meant nothing. Let's go through the list. He promised cheaper energy bills—broken. Energy prices are going up by \$77 in the south-east. Universal household energy rebates are gone. He promised 2,200 new hospital beds by 2028—broken. Now we get vague uncoded promises with no timeframes, no locations and no delivery plan. He said debt would be lower—wrong. The state is now staring down \$205 billion of debt by 2028, with an \$8 billion deficit this year alone. This debt is not even delivering better services—just more spin and more taxpayer funded advertising for a bad budget.

There is more. The Premier also promised no new stadiums. He promised to keep the majority of directors-general. He promised to appoint the member for Mudgeeraba as the health minister. He promised to appoint the member for Nanango as the water minister, to have a dedicated local government minister and to be the tourism minister himself. On all of these promises he has broken his word. He promised measurable KPIs for ministers and that he would hold them accountable—broken. He promised Queensland government consulting would save \$757 million by 30 June and be established by 1 July this year—broken. He promised transparency and integrity, but what did Queenslanders get? They got funding cut for the Environmental Defenders Office, hand-picked LNP-aligned appointments to supposedly independent bodies, secrecy around cabinet documents, project cost blowouts and transport timelines. This government's credibility is shot.

On infrastructure, again, it is Labor that delivered and the LNP that delays and cuts. The Premier promised to fix congestion. Instead, this budget cuts \$13.1 billion from the four-year infrastructure pipeline. Projects that Queenslanders were relying on to ease traffic and improve transport access are now on the chopping block. They will also cut 3,000 road and transport jobs over the next four years.

On energy it is the same story. They have halved investment in battery storage projects. They have slowed down the CopperString project and gone slow on the Borumba pumped hydro.

When it comes to health, this is perhaps the most damning evidence of this government's fail. This budget confirms that the LNP is not committed to delivering the hospital infrastructure that Queenslanders deserve. There is no funding for the new dedicated spinal unit at the PA. There is no detailed timeline or budget for the promised 2,600 new hospital beds. Hospital projects from Cairns to Caboolture are being delayed or descope. This is not 'record health investment'; it is record health neglect.

While the government cannot fund hospital beds, cannot fund infrastructure and cannot fund meaningful cost-of-living relief, they have somehow found taxpayers' money to change the Queensland government's official colour from maroon to blue. Yes, that is right. The LNP is spending taxpayers' money to strip maroon from government branding and replace it with blue. At a time when families are struggling with grocery bills, rising rents and mortgage stress, the LNP is prioritising political rebranding over service delivery. Queenslanders do not want their government logos to be blue; they want their power bills to be lower, their hospital wait times to be shorter and their kids' schools upgraded. This is vanity spending at its worst—a government that governs for itself, not the people.

Frankly, I have seen many members opposite dismiss this issue, laugh at it and say it is silly changing the Queensland coat of arms from maroon to blue. I have seen the reaction out there in the community. The people are rightly annoyed. They are also a little confused about their behaviour. For some not engaged in politics—for those people who do not follow politics every day—it has been a massive red flag. People in my community who have undoubtedly voted for the LNP will be thinking twice after the behaviour of the LNP—not consulting anyone and then changing the Queensland coat of arms from maroon to blue so that it more closely aligns with LNP branding.

Let me bring it back to the people of Stretton. Families in Stretton are still doing it tough. Interest rates remain high. Grocery and fuel prices are climbing. Insurance premiums are soaring. Rents and mortgage stress are putting pressure on household budgets. Labor delivered real cost-of-living support with \$1,000 electricity rebates, 20 per cent off car rego and 50-cent public transport fares. This LNP government has stripped away universal energy rebates and has done nothing new for families struggling to make ends meet.

On infrastructure the story is just as grim. Labor funded the Kuraby to Gold Coast faster rail project, including the removal of the dangerous Kuraby level crossing, and funded the Cooper Plains level crossing removal. My community is happy that the funding for these projects remains, yet on rail this budget offers no new commitments for further level crossing removals along Beenleigh Road. In particular, the Warrigal Road level crossing remains problematic for my community. There are also no guarantees for vital school upgrades at Runcorn State High School for their fields, Stretton State College for their fields, and much needed improvements to traffic road safety.

There is also not enough funding for our multicultural communities. With \$5 million allocated for multicultural community halls over four years that is hardly going to build much. The question I have for the government is where are these halls going to be built and who is going to get them? As a member who represents one of the most multicultural electorates in Queensland, I certainly hope this money is spent where those communities live.

Following Labor's \$30 million investment in upgrades to the Beaudesert and Illaweena Street intersection, which have been great for our community, this budget does not show any funding for the next stage of upgrades to Beaudesert Road, which are much needed by my community. Another

disappointment for my electorate is that, whilst the LNP makes flashy announcements about installing CCTV cameras in some parts of Queensland—like Brisbane city or Burleigh on the Gold Coast—Stretton misses out despite community concerns and the need for enhanced safety measures in local parks, shopping centres and streets. There is no funding for CCTV in Stretton.

It is clear this is a government that picks and chooses based on politics, not need. Let's remember this is a government that said there would be no new stadiums, lower debt, more hospital beds, cheaper energy, greater transparency and honest government. On every count they have broken their promises. Queenslanders deserve a government that believes in something; a government with a vision and a government that keeps its word, delivers real cost-of-living relief, invests in schools and hospitals, and keeps building the infrastructure that Queenslanders need. Labor stands for fairness, opportunity and action, not announcements. As the member for Stretton, I will continue to hold this government to account because Queenslanders deserve better.